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Prehistoric Cultures of the Southeast

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History No. 4

Prehistoric Cultures of the Southeast



1941

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
THE INTERIOR, HAROLD L. ICKES, *Secretary*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NEWTON B. DRURY, *Director*

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SOME IMPORTANT ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES
IN SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES

The Coordination of Southeastern Archeological Studies*

*By A. R. Kelly, Chief, Archeologic Sites Division, Branch of Historic
Sites, National Park Service.*

DURING the last few years, archeological exploration in the eastern United States, particularly in the southeast portion, has flourished under sponsorship of numerous local and State scientific organizations in cooperation with the Smithsonian Institution. In several instances, involving both National and State park developments, the National Park Service has served as sponsor.

At Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon, Ga., there has been developed the first national monument east of the Mississippi River which is predicated primarily or solely on American prehistory. Interest created by archeological exploration and restoration projects at Ocmulgee has led to the demand from many parts of the Southeast that a museum be established which would serve as a center of prehistoric research and survey for the whole region. Tentative plans were drawn for a museum and initial work on a small unit of the structure was started under the Emergency Relief Act. [A modern administration-museum building which will cost approximately \$280,000 is in progress.—ED.]

* From *The Regional Review* (National Park Service, Region One, Richmond, Va.), Vol. I, No. 1, July 1938, pp. 9-12.

At Mound State Monument, Moundville, Ala., another smaller park museum is in process of erection. [An excellent structure has been completed.—ED.] A State-wide archeological survey was initiated to catalog the prehistoric resources of Alabama. Similarly, the University of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources have combined to sponsor a State-wide archeological survey.

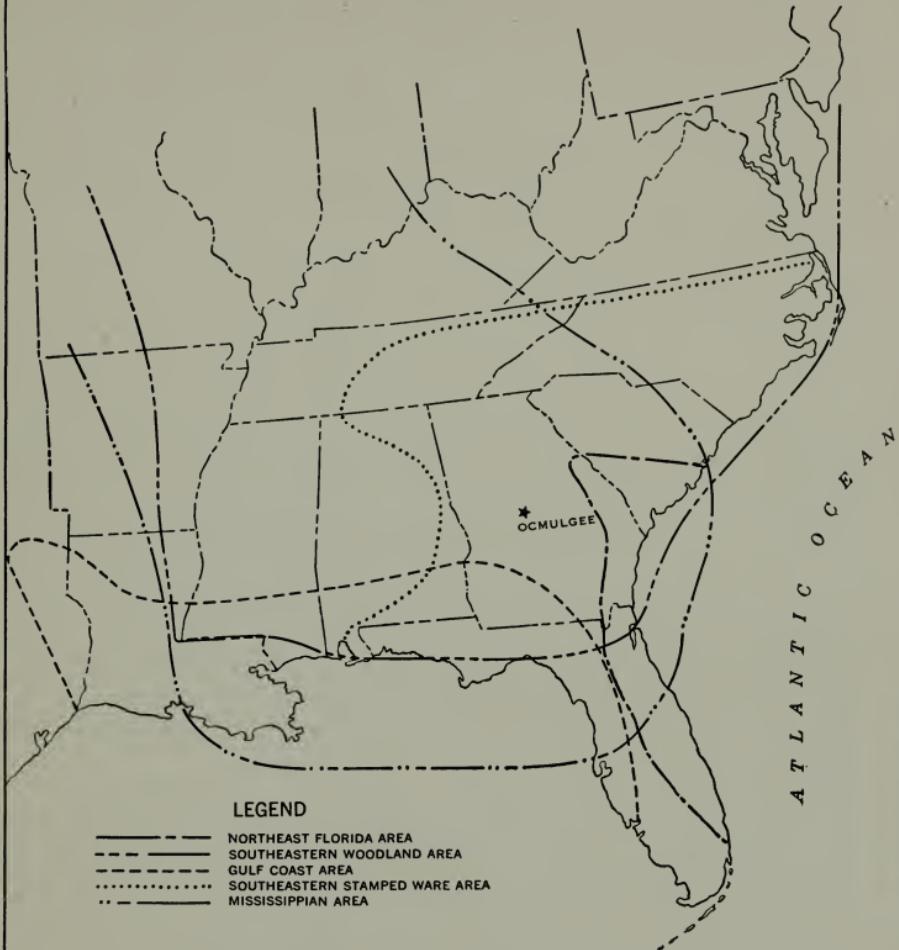
In Tennessee, the University of Tennessee has carried out extensive archeological investigations in an effort to salvage valuable sites and information from destruction as a result of the impounding of waters under the Tennessee Valley Authority program.

The largest scale archeological operations under emergency relief auspices have been those directed by Prof. W. S. Webb, Chairman, Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky. Work is still going on in connection with an extended TVA program to salvage many valuable sites which will soon be under water.

At Louisiana State University, James A. Ford, Research Associate in Archeology, a former assistant in directing archeological explorations at Ocmulgee and later a collaborator in the restoration of the Macon ceremonial earth lodge, is continuing an archeological survey, begun several years ago, which resulted then in extensive surface collection of study sherds from many village sites in Louisiana and Mississippi.

All these institutions in the southeastern United States sent representatives to the Ceramic Repository at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich., to discuss the problem of obtaining uniform terminology and essential agreement in classification of pottery, regarded as the best criteria available to the archeologist in working out problems of cultural relations.

As a result of the Ann Arbor meeting, it was decided to establish a uniform pottery nomenclature involving a trinominal classification referring to pottery types perceived to be distinctive and



TENTATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF MAJOR SOUTHEASTERN CULTURES

NOTE.—The five prehistoric cultural distributions can be indicated only approximately because their periods of development in the Southeast took place over a span of 700 to 1,000 years. The clue to these cultures consists of distinctive pottery types found on the sites assigned to the different horizons of prehistory. *Areas as suggested by Dr. A. R. Kelly and compiled by Gordon R. Willey.*

widely distributed in the Southeast. This trinominal system of classifying Indian pottery promises to have wide usage as pottery types agreed upon in discussion are to be recognized as standard among the group of specialized workers in the southeastern area. The method of standardization allows for a maximum interchange between the respective field workers with results coordinated in annual or semiannual conferences.

All archeological field workers in the region will have opportunity to see and become acquainted with the new pottery types, as proponents of the types will send representative examples to each of seven centers where archeological survey is going on. After a period of discussion, criticism, and correspondence on the pottery types, the members in joint conference will decide upon the selection of approved types. Full descriptions, with pen drawings of these types, will then appear in mimeographed form, put out under the editorship of Mr. Ford at Louisiana State University. Copies will be supplied to the cooperating field workers in archeology. The same institutions have expressed, individually, a desire to see the coordination of pottery studies carried further in a uniform systematization of methods of archeological survey in the Southeast.

These preliminary agreements between cooperating institutions in the southeastern United States will facilitate the program of surveying historical and archeological sites under the sponsorship of the National Park Service. It is recognized that the administrative difficulties of undertaking a Nation-wide survey of historical and archeological sites would be extremely complex and unwieldy. For this reason, a regional breakdown in supervision is contemplated, with the Southeast serving as a testing ground for initial efforts to realize objectives in survey. The following institutions, either now engaged in archeological survey or planning surveys in the near future, have expressed an interest in the plan: Louisiana State University, and the Universities of Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Georgia.

Ocmulgee National Monument has become a center of archeological survey activity. Throughout the Southeast, other collaborating institutions, as named, have expressed individual concurrence and support for the projected plan to establish at Ocmulgee an archeological museum of regional character, which will serve the area in much the same manner that the Laboratory of Anthropology at Santa Fe, N. Mex., acts as a research center to unify survey and research activities in archeology in the Southwest.

Recent additions to our knowledge of southeastern prehistory, coming from extensive explorations undertaken in several parts of the region, strongly suggest a number of distinctive localized cultural manifestations, whose character must be perceived at present on the basis of specialized pottery traits. These cultural subdivisions of the Southeast have some geographic distinction, and seem to be separate hearths or centers which nourished distinctive cultural developments, and that, as centers of diffusion, they influenced widely and at different times the prehistoric settlements in central Georgia on the Ocmulgee. Specifically, it appears that the Ocmulgee site was influenced from afar by several of these centers, and that the central Georgia area was peripheral to such influences.

The following cultural subareas might be defined tentatively as showing appreciable localized or specialized cultural developments in the southeastern archeological area regarded as a whole:

- (1) The lower and middle Mississippi;
- (2) The Piedmont or Southern Appalachian section, comprising north Georgia, with extension into the mountainous sections of neighboring States;
- (3) The South Atlantic littoral, which includes the coastal plains and confluent major drainage in the Carolinas, and the Savannah Basin with a long Atlantic coastal sweep south into Florida;
- (4) The Florida Gulf Coast, which extends west into Alabama;

(5) The fall-line region of central Georgia, with Macon on the Ocmulgee as a central point whose cultural position might be connoted by geographical reference as the southeastern marginal subarea.

The strategic position of the last-named cultural subarea, the central Georgia fall-line, finds Macon and Ocmulgee National Monument situated in the precise spot where cultural influences were being received from the greatest number of developing cultural centers. This makes Ocmulgee an ideal museum location for the Southeast, and also makes it an advantageous center from which to initiate a southeastern archeological survey.

It may not be generally recognized how much responsibility is invested in the National Park Service to conduct such a survey of archeologic and historic sites. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 specifically embodies the national policy as applied to the preservation of historic sites, and fixes the duty of surveying historic and archeologic sites directly upon the Secretary of the Interior, through the National Park Service. The duty and functions of the Service in section 2 of this act definitely impose the obligation to undertake a survey and to carry out research investigation needed to evaluate the various sites.

In pursuance of the conditions created by the Historic Sites Act of 1935, an interbureau agreement defining objectives and working relationships has been reached between the Branch of Historic Sites of the National Park Service and the Smithsonian Institution regarding survey planning and the coordination of Government activities in conducting archeological investigation.

Ocmulgee's Trading Post Riddle*

By A. R. Kelly, Chief, Archeologic Sites Division, Branch of Historic Sites, and Louis Friedlander, former student technician in history

IN 1936 archeological work under direction of Dr. Kelly on the middle plateau section of Ocmulgee fields, near Macon, Ga., revealed unmistakable evidence of what in all probability was a trading post established among the Creek Indians during the closing years of the seventeenth century by English traders working out of Charleston, S. C. The discovery came as a surprise because there were no known historical records concerning a trading post or a fort at this location for the early colonial period. An interesting archeological-historical problem thus presented itself.

In an attempt to establish by historical documentation the existence of a trading post of the Ocmulgee to agree with the evidence uncovered by the archeologist, a student technician, Louis Friedlander, of Columbia University, was assigned in 1938 to the task of examining the colonial records and archives at Columbia, S. C. It was believed that there, if anywhere, would be found documents bearing on the problem. He spent several weeks without finding a single direct reference to a trading post on the Ocmulgee near the present city of Macon. Sixteen volumes of the *Calendar of State Papers* for the period 1690-1715 were examined, but they yielded no specific information. It

* From *The Regional Review* (National Park Service, Region One, Richmond, Va.), Vol. II, No. 1, January 1939, pp. 3-11. The collations are by Roy Edgar Appleman, Regional Supervisor of Historic Sites.

has not been possible to make anything approaching a complete examination of all the early South Carolina records because they have never been indexed and arranged in such form that they may be readily used. Considerable material was found, however, to substantiate strongly the inference that a trading post might have been established at Ocmulgee. For the present, there remains unsolved a fascinating problem of historical research, one which must receive further attention if we are to develop and interpret adequately for the public the potential contributions which this site has to offer in knowledge of the prehistory and history of the Southeast.

Dr. Verner W. Crane, Professor of History at the University of Michigan, an outstanding authority on the southeastern Indian frontier, in a letter dated September 30, 1938, comments on the lack of precise information in the early Indian books and colonial records regarding trading establishments. He states that he has found "Descriptions of trading posts in the South are practically nonexistent," and offers the suggestion that this is so, "probably for the reason that the references to them are made not by travelers writing for the general public, but by traders and agents in reports to persons who need no descriptions." He has suggested the Ocmulgee post may have been associated with the enterprises of a trader named John Bee who, according to Dr. Crane's own research, "maintained a trading factory on the Upper Ocmulgee for some years after the desertion of the Lower Creeks and in 1725 took out licenses for a 'parcel of traders' to the Choctaw."

The following *résumé* of the archeological findings at the site of the supposed trading post are taken from "A Preliminary Report on Archeological Explorations at Macon, Ga.," by Dr. Kelly, *Bulletin 119*, Bureau of American Ethnology, (Anthropological Papers, No. 1), Smithsonian Institution, Washington, 1938.

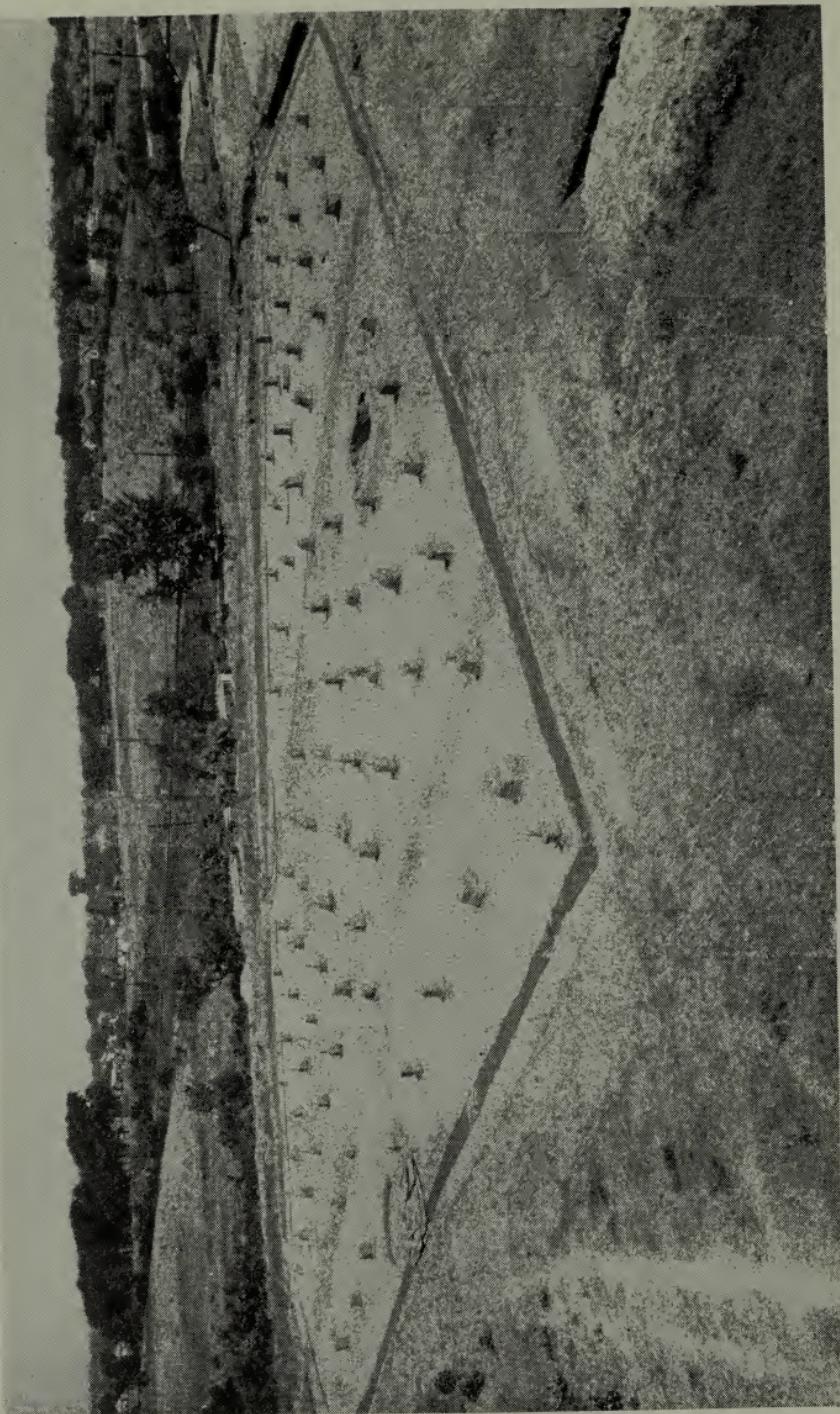


A FIVE-SIDED enclosure was worked out in its entirety. There was a broad base side, 140 feet long, facing the river toward the northwest. Two shorter sides or legs set at right angles to the base extended southeast 40 feet. The two remaining sides converged to form a triangle or gabled point directed southeast. The two sides forming the apex of the five-sided enclosure were 100 feet in length. The footing ditch, for such it was now perceived to be, had two breaks in its continuity in the base or front. One of these was 12 feet wide, the other 5 feet wide; they were apparently gates opening into the stockade from the river approach.

There were no remaining indications of decayed wood found except for the darker discolorations or black organic mold with thin discontinuous water-laid sand laminated between the darker soil areas. Vertical profiles through the footing ditch indicated horizontally laid logs probably pegged together. Early difficulties in planning the area to discover post molds were thus explained.

Inside the enclosure were rectangular areas of dark soil suggesting the decay of numerous logs. These were considered to be indications of what had once been cabins or storerooms.

Both in and around the enclosure were found burials of Indians of all ages and sexes, associated with European trade artifacts and objects of Indian manufacture, including pottery. A number of burial tracts not previously observed were encountered. The prevailing custom of primary flexed burials was noted, corresponding in this respect to burials at Lamar and other sites. However, the presence of artificial frontal deformation in a number of burials implied that this custom was much more prevalent in historic than in prehistoric times. Also several burials, again associated with European objects, were definitely cremated. The calcined bones had been heaped together and buried with guns, knives, axes, beads, iron ornaments, and other items.



The pentagonal base outline of the old structure at Ocmulgee National Monument is shown by the dark band of soil visible near the periphery of the cleaned area. The small square blocks of earth are control sections left around each stake of the grid system during excavation.

In addition to the burials in and around the enclosure there were numerous indications of house sites in the form of broad oval wall continuities traced out from post-hole alignments. The tendency for large domestic pits to be located in the center of these simple timber houses was noted in several instances and generous quantities of pottery, animal bones, flint scrap, and artifacts, scattered European objects, including some glassware and crockery, were taken from the fill. The houses were small, usually not exceeding 15 feet in diameter, and were sometimes smaller.

The implied construction consisted of light sapling wall timbers probably bent and tied to form the roof, with brush or reeds covering the whole. Sod might have been used also but this was not evidenced in the debris.

In addition to the house sites there were uncovered numerous refuse pits not definitely associated with post-hole indications of house floors. Midden materials found *in situ* on the occupation level on which the houses were troweled out added to the data of exploration around the enclosures.

Another interesting feature was the profiled indication of a beaten trail terminating in front of the entrance to the trading post site. In profile the trail appeared as a ditch-like excavation 6 to 8 feet wide varying from 14 to 24 inches in depth. A bluish mucky clay fill in the bottom of the trail impression implied gradual deposition of clay sediments in stagnant water. The upper fill consisted mostly of water-laid or wind-blown sand.

The same trail indications had been followed at 50-foot intervals all the way across the plateau from a point at the extreme northeast rim margin beyond the outer dugout series north of Mound D to a point converging on the entrance of the trading post. The total extent of the trail thus surveyed was approximately three-quarters of a mile. Beyond the entrance to the enclosure the trail was picked up again in profile and carried southeast toward the river, dropping down from the plateau

below the lower west slopes of Mound B. Beyond that point present explorations have not been attempted to trace the trail to its intersection with the river. In all likelihood river erosion has destroyed any vestiges in the plain below the plateau.

Another structural feature of importance was brought out in final exploration around the footing ditch. This was a moat-like ditch, separated by an average distance of 20 feet from the footing ditch, which indicated the line of the trading post stockade. The borrow ditch ran parallel to the footing ditch around four of the sides. It did not extend in front of the broadest or base side. The width averaged 10 feet with gently sloping sides; the depth varied from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet. The fill showed a bluish mucky clay in the bottom with water-laid sands and loams in the top fill. Midden accumulations, refuse pits which had been cut through in the process of making the moat-like ditch, burials made in the floor after the excavations were made, all served to substantiate the view that the ditch was obviously related to the structure of the five-sided enclosure.

The quantity of European trade materials found in midden, house site accumulations, and definitely associated with burials, indicated a rather numerous population of historic Indians living around a trading post which seemed at a later date to have been partly fortified. The interpretation of the moat-like ditch is still in doubt, although five-sided wall enclosures with moat-like ditches surrounding the walls were a frequent construction in the seventeenth and eighteenth century colonial fortifications of the Southeast. The cataloged European materials exhibited a large number of finds which were weapons of war. In addition to the guns, knives, swords, and pistols found with burials, there were scores of gun flints, molded lead bullets, brass buckles, buttons, and other objects suggestive of military equipment. In contrast with these materials were many trade objects, such as beads, clay pipes, coiled iron wristlets, and copper and brass sheets sometimes rolled into small funnels or into cylinders. Several burials of

children and women with beads and other trade trinkets were catalogued from the area.

The field data previously summarized seem fairly conclusive to the effect that general exploratory trench explorations had come upon the site of a large and thriving trading post. The military character of many of the European finds seemed on first impressions to be too evident to suggest an ordinary establishment set up primarily for trade. The presence of 50 burials representing individuals of various ages and sexes denoted the existence of a stable population and probably a fairly sizable community, as these interments had been uncovered in only so much area as was represented in general trench exploration.

Pronounce It Oak-mull-ghee

ESTABLISHMENT in 1936 of a national monument embracing the rich archeological treasures of Ocmulgee Fields, an ancient Indian town situated at the edge of the present city of Macon, about 4 miles from the geographic center of Georgia, has brought that aboriginal name with increasing frequency to American lips. Many variants in pronunciation sprang up as the word spread farther and farther from the region of its origin.

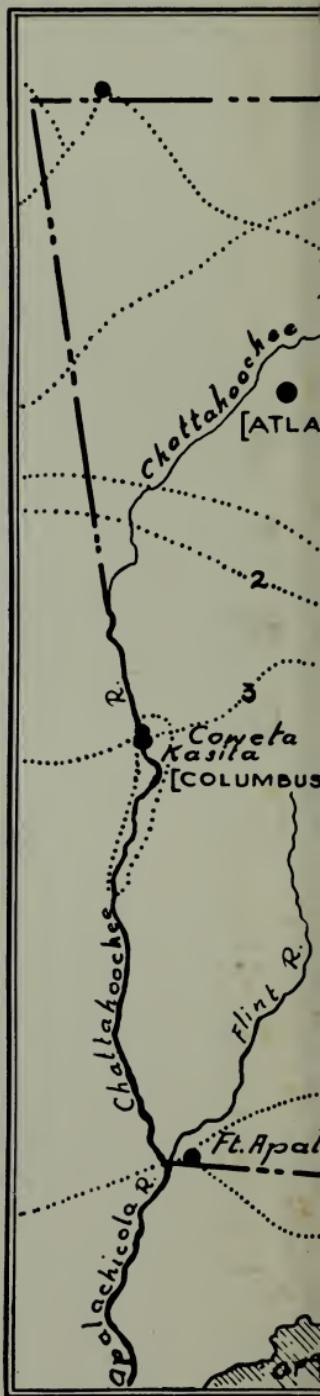
Ocmulgee, meaning *boiling water*, is from the Hitchiti tongue, a dialect spoken among the Lower Creeks. It is pronounced as though spelled *oak-mull-ghee* (the g hard) with stress on the second syllable. That pronunciation is preferred by the Bureau of American Ethnology. It prevails today throughout the Ocmulgee River valley of middle Georgia.

According to Creek tradition Ocmulgee was the site of the first permanent Creek settlement after migration of the tribe from the West.

TRAIL SYSTEM OF GEORGIA AND SOUTHERN CAROLINA

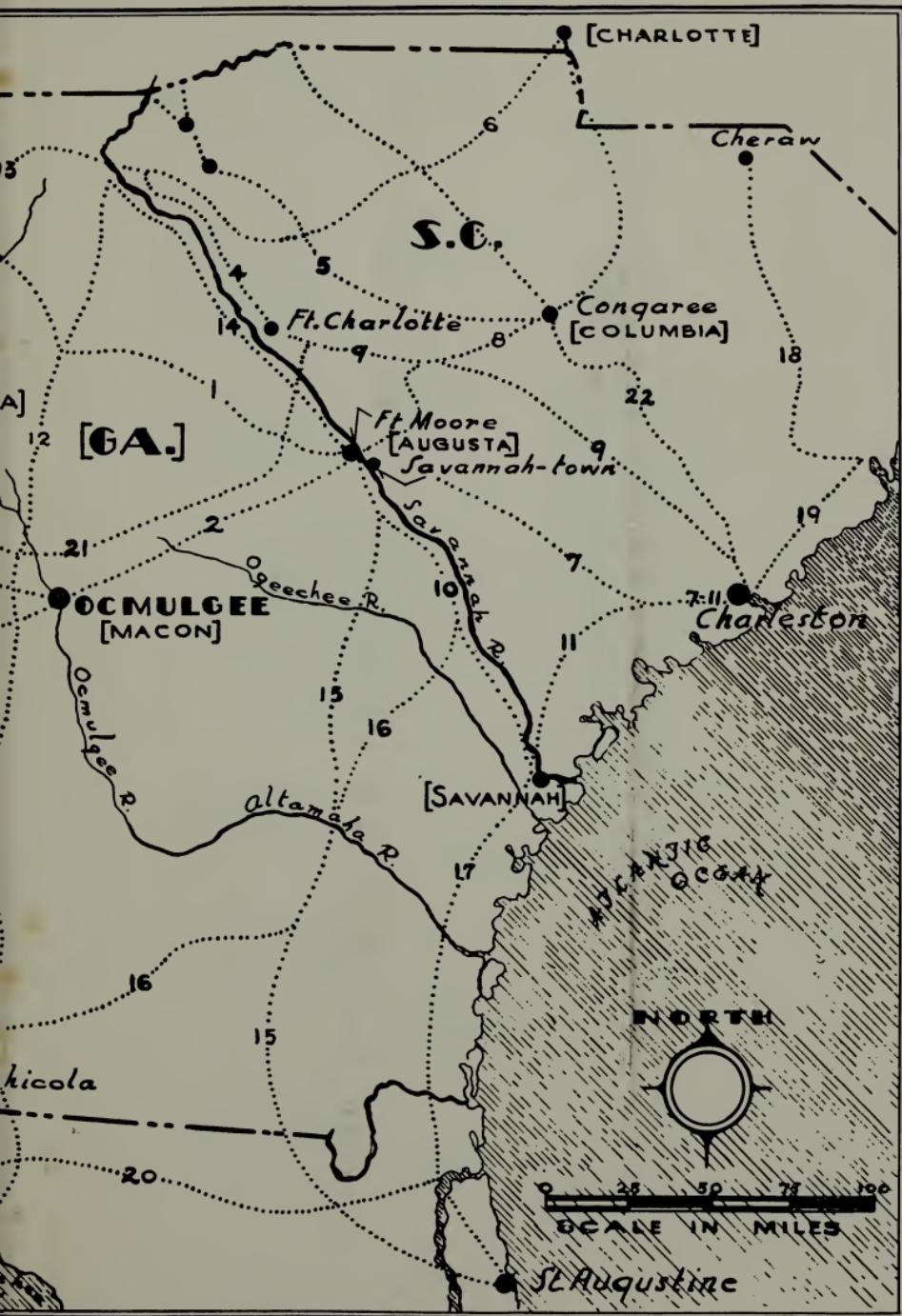
(Adapted from a map published in the 42d Annual Report of the Georgia Historical Commission)

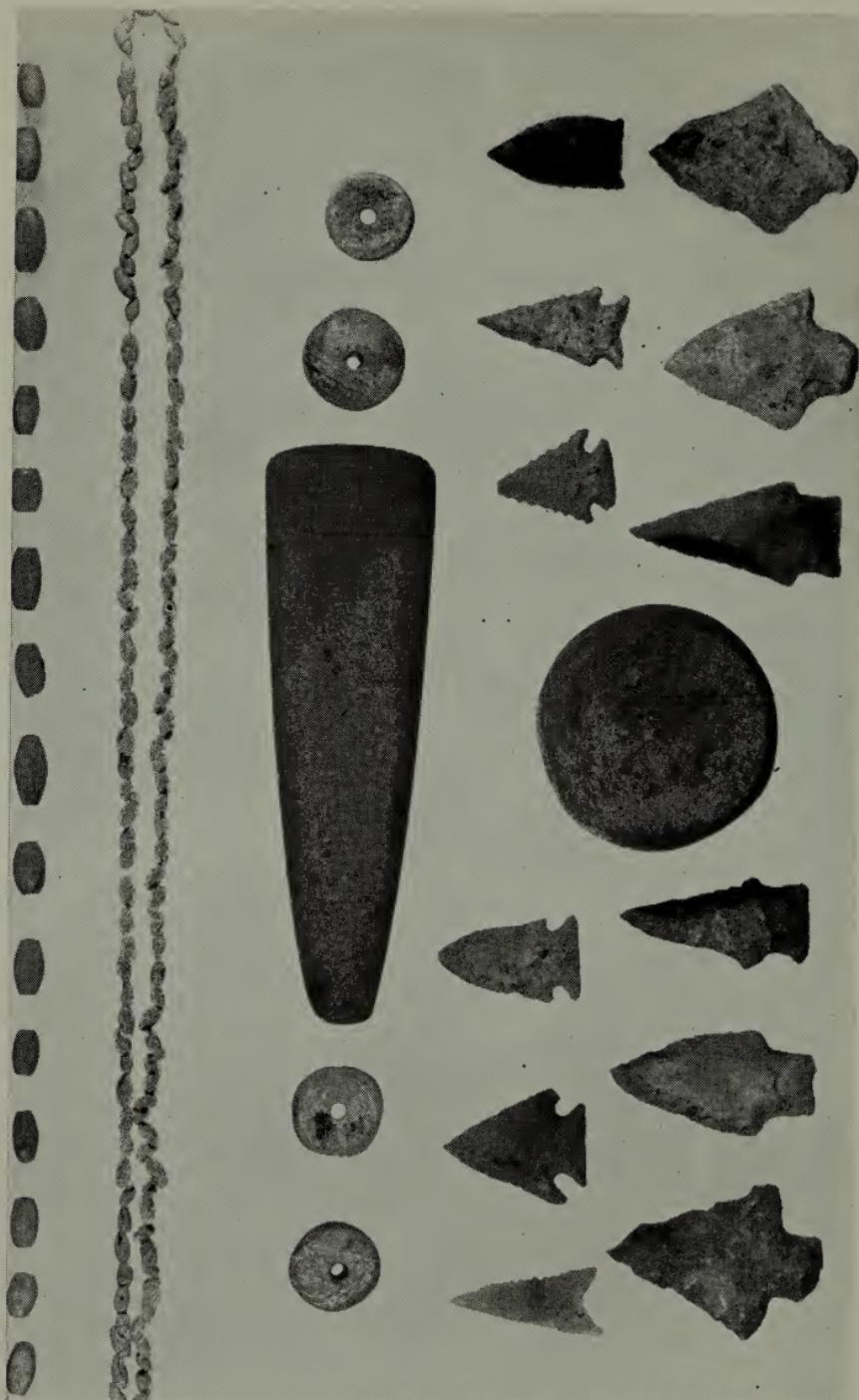
1. Cisca-St. Augustine Trail.
2. Lower Creek Trading Path.
3. Augusta, Macon, Montgomery, and Mobile Trail.
4. Old Path from Fort Charlotte to the Cherokee Country.
5. Old Cherokee Trading Path.
6. Lower Cherokee Traders' Path before 1775.
7. Trail from Fort Moore (Augusta) to Charleston.
8. Occaneechi Path.
9. Charleston-Fort Charlotte Trail.
10. Augusta-Savannah Trail.
11. Charleston-Savannah Trail.
12. Tugaloo-Apalachee Bay Trail.
13. Old Indian Path between Tugaloo and Coosa.
14. Trail from Augusta to the Cherokee via Fort Charlotte.
15. Augusta-St. Augustine Trail.
16. Old Trading Path from the Savannah to Pensacola.
17. Savannah-Jacksonville Trail.
18. Trail from Winyah Bay to the Cheraws.
19. Charleston-Winyah Bay Trail.
20. Trail from Jacksonville to mouth of the Flint River.
21. Middle Creek Trading Path.
22. Old South Carolina Road to the North.



CAROLINA—IN EARLY COLONIAL DAYS

(ort, Bureau of American Ethnology, op. p. 748.)





Many thousands of arrowheads, beads, and other objects have been uncovered by archeological excavations at Ocmulgee National Monument.

THE following extracts from Mr. Friedlander's historical research report (typewritten manuscript, September 1938) on the Ocmulgee trading post problem indicate the general field of English and Spanish trade relationships with the southeastern Indians and the general character of Colonial rivalry involved in early white contact with the aboriginal occupants of what is now southeastern United States. Considering the historical circumstances of period and environment, the establishment and operation of a trading post at Ocmulgee would appear to be convincingly logical.



THROUGHOUT the Colonial period, the Indian trade was the chief instrument of Carolinian expansion. Its importance can readily be seen in the activities of Indian traders in attempting to win the friendship of the Lower Creeks away from their previous Spanish alliance to an English one. The urge of a highly profitable commerce led the English traders farther into the wilderness in this region than they were wont to venture in the north. By 1700 "they were in contact and in keen rivalry not only with the Spanish of Florida, but also with the French in the region of the Gulf and the lower Mississippi."¹

The first Englishman to make contacts with the Creeks was Henry Woodward. Probably in 1670 and certainly in 1685, Woodward journeyed to the villages of the Creeks on the Chattahoochee. This was the region of their early home before their migration in 1690. It is safe to say that Woodward must have passed through Ocmulgee Fields on his journey westward—this being the shortest route to the Creek villages. But definite proof of this is lacking.² We are certain though that "both at Coweta, the 'war town,' and Kashita, the 'peace town,' the English with their trading goods were cordially welcomed."³

The final victory of English diplomacy resulted in the move-

ment of the Lower Creeks, about 1690, from their old home on the Chattahoochee to the region on the Upper Ocmulgee, the primary reason for this being that they would be closer to the source of the English trade and in a direct line with Charleston over the Lower Trading Path which connected with their settlement via Savanna Town (near present-day Augusta).⁴ It was the lure of cheap English goods that decided the contest between English and Spanish traders. Dr. Crane observes:

From the western river the Lower Creeks now migrated eastward to the upper waters of the Altamaha. Most of their new towns were placed along the Upper Ocmulgee River, known to the English as Ochese Creek. There for the next quarter-century was maintained the great center of the southern Indian trade. Goods for this trade were sent by packhorse, periago, or Indian burdeners, to the inland intrepot at Savanna Town, on the left bank of the Savanna at the falls. An early map shows also "the Old fort" on the right bank, near the site of Augusta. An outpost apparently, of the Carolina traders, this was probably the first English establishment upon the soil of Georgia. From Savanna Town . . . most goods were transported southward, by two trails which branched near the Ogeche River. One, the Upper Path, led to Coweta Town; the other, the Lower Path, to the settlements of the Ocmulgee and Hitchiti nearer the forks of the Altamaha. All Georgia, under Creek sway, was an English sphere of influence.⁵

Thus the importance of trade on the Upper Ocmulgee is clearly established. We should naturally expect to find numerous references to the establishment of a trading post at Ocmulgee Fields to substantiate the archeological evidence of one found by Dr. Kelly in 1936. But the lack of material on this particular point is surprising.

Until 1715 the English controlled the trade of the Lower Creeks. Governor Nathaniel Johnson showed a keen realization of the importance of their trade when he declared in an official report that the Cherokee were "a numerous people but very Lasey," and their trade inconsiderable in comparison with the flourishing

southern and western trade of the Greeks who were described as "Great Hunters and Warriors and consume great quantity of English Goods."⁶

Not only was the Ochese Creek country important in itself for trade, but likewise "it soon became a base for the further extension of trade . . . From the Ocmulgee were sent out many of those slave-taking expeditions against Florida, and, later, against Louisiana, which provided an outlet for the warlike energies of the Indians, enriched the traders, and served to weaken the defenses of the rival Colonial establishment in the South."⁷

In 1708 the first commission to control the Indian trade was established in Charleston. The *Journal* of the Commissioners for the Indian Trade is an invaluable record and from it can be obtained the names of the traders with the Lower Creek Indians. The agents of the Commissioners and very often the traders themselves were required to make reports on conditions and the extent of trade among the Indians. These reports are not contained in the *Journals* and if they could be found they would almost certainly provide a wealth of material on the post at Ocmulgee. The *Journals* themselves are bare of material immediately relevant to a trading post at Ocmulgee Fields. The most important traders with the Lower Creeks, as indicated by the *Journals*, were John Chester, John Weaver, Richard Gower, William Britt, and Samuel Everleigh. All references to their names in the *Journals* have been followed but nowhere is an Ocmulgee post mentioned. Samuel Everleigh is especially important because it was he who supplied the traders with merchandise for the Creek trade.⁸

During Queen Anne's War (1702–1713) the region surrounding Ocmulgee became extremely important because it served as a frontier line between the Spanish and English spheres of influence. The anxiety of the colony in regard to the friendship of the Creeks is shown by a letter of Governor James Moore in 1702 in which he writes:

That you think of Some way to Confirm ye Cussatoes who live on Ocha-Sa Creek & ye Svannos in the place they now live in, and to our ffriendly they being the only People by whom Wee expect Advice of an Inland Invasion.⁹

In 1702 Queen Anne's War was precipitated in America by Anthony Dodsworth, often referred to as "Captain Antonio." It was he who led a force of 500 Creeks from Coweta to the Flint River to defeat the advancing force of Spaniards and their allies the Apalachees. Dodsworth is an elusive figure in the history of the period and conclusive evidence is lacking to the effect that he was ever at Ocmulgee. Nor can we be certain what part he played in Moore's expedition in 1703, although we know that it was he who urged the Commons House of the necessity of sending out the expedition. It was at the Creek villages on the Ocmulgee, the site now included in Ocmulgee National Monument and within which the archeological evidence of what is thought to have been a trading post has been found, that James Moore in 1703 fitted out his expedition in company with 50 Carolinians and concentrated 1,000 Indian allies on the meadows beside the post, armed them and proceeded south where he defeated a large force of Spaniards and Apalachee Indians.¹⁰

The *Journals of the Commons House of Assembly* record:

Coll. Ja. Moore be commissionated to Raise a Party of men to go to ye Assistance of ye Cowetaws, And other our ffriendly Indjans, And to Attacque ye Appellaches and allso to Concurr with this House in Sending a Present to ye sd Indjans our ffriends And present the Same To this House To-Morrow Morning.¹¹

The only letter we possess of James Moore at this time is a report to the Governor on his victory over the Spaniards and their allies, but it does not contain any information on Ocmulgee itself.¹² Certainly Moore must have written back to the Governor from Ocmulgee or kept notes himself on the beginnings of the expedition.

Moore was a visionary Governor and he developed a conception of the destinies of England in this quarter of America far in advance of his time. Under his governorship South Carolina trade was actively fostered and, indeed, it was hard to distinguish between the leaders in trade and the leaders in government. He saw the necessity of destroying Spanish influence among the Southern tribes and his records are, therefore, especially important.

Sir Robert Quary, King's Commissioner of Customs stationed at this time in the South, has a good description of the consequences of Moore's expedition of 1703 and gives an enthusiastic estimate of the importance of his campaign in a report back to England.¹³ But this report also lacks definite information on Ocmulgee.

Research is aided by the fact that we can pin down the probability of establishing the post to within a definite number of years, that is, from about 1690 to 1715. The Creeks migrated to the Ocmulgee about 1690 and emigrated back to their old grounds on the Chattahoochee in 1715 after the Yamassee Wars.¹⁴ Governor Johnson's report to the Board of Trade in 1719 is interesting insofar as he records the beginning of the latter war. It says:

By the within Account of the Number of Indians Subject to the Government of South Carolina in the year 1715 Yo Lord ps will finde upwards of Eight and twenty thousand Souls of which there was Nine Thousand Men, which traded for above 1,000 lbs sterling Yearly in Cloth Guns Powder Bullets and Iron Ware and made return in Black Skins Doe Skins, Furs and other Peltry, and there was one or other near 200 English Indian Traders employed as Factors by Ye merchants of Carolina Amongst them; But in ye Said Year 1715 most of them rose in Rebellion and Murdered ye Said Traders & Severall of the Planters and their Family' that lay most exposed to them.¹⁵

While the information now known to us does not permit any definite or conclusive statement based on historical records regard-

ing the question posed by the archeological discoveries at Ocmulgee, the weight of indirect evidence strongly supports the hypothesis that a trading post was established there among the Creeks by the Carolinian traders.

Notes

¹ Verner W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier* (1928), p. 22.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 35.

³ H. E. Bolton and Mary Ross, *The Debatable Land*, University of California Press (1925), pp. 48 ff.

⁴ Verner W. Crane, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁵ "The Origins of Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 14 (1930), pp. 92-110.

⁶ *Records of the British Public Record Office Relating to South Carolina*, Vol. 5, p. 207.

⁷ Verner W. Crane, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁸ *Journals of the Commons House of Assembly*, 1792, p. 133.

⁹ *Journals of the Commons House of Assembly*, 1702, Edited by A. S. Salley, p. 6.

¹⁰ Verner W. Crane, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

¹¹ P. 103.

¹² This letter is reprinted in Carroll's *Historical Collections of South Carolina*, Vol. 2, pp. 574-576.

¹³ Contained in the *Documents Relating to the Colonial History of New York*, Vol. 4, p. 1088.

¹⁴ *Records of the British Public Record Office Relating to South Carolina*, January 12, 1719-1720, p. 235.

¹⁵ This migration is established clearly in Bolton & Ross, *Spanish Resistance to the Carolina Traders*, GHQ, Vol. 9, p. 115.

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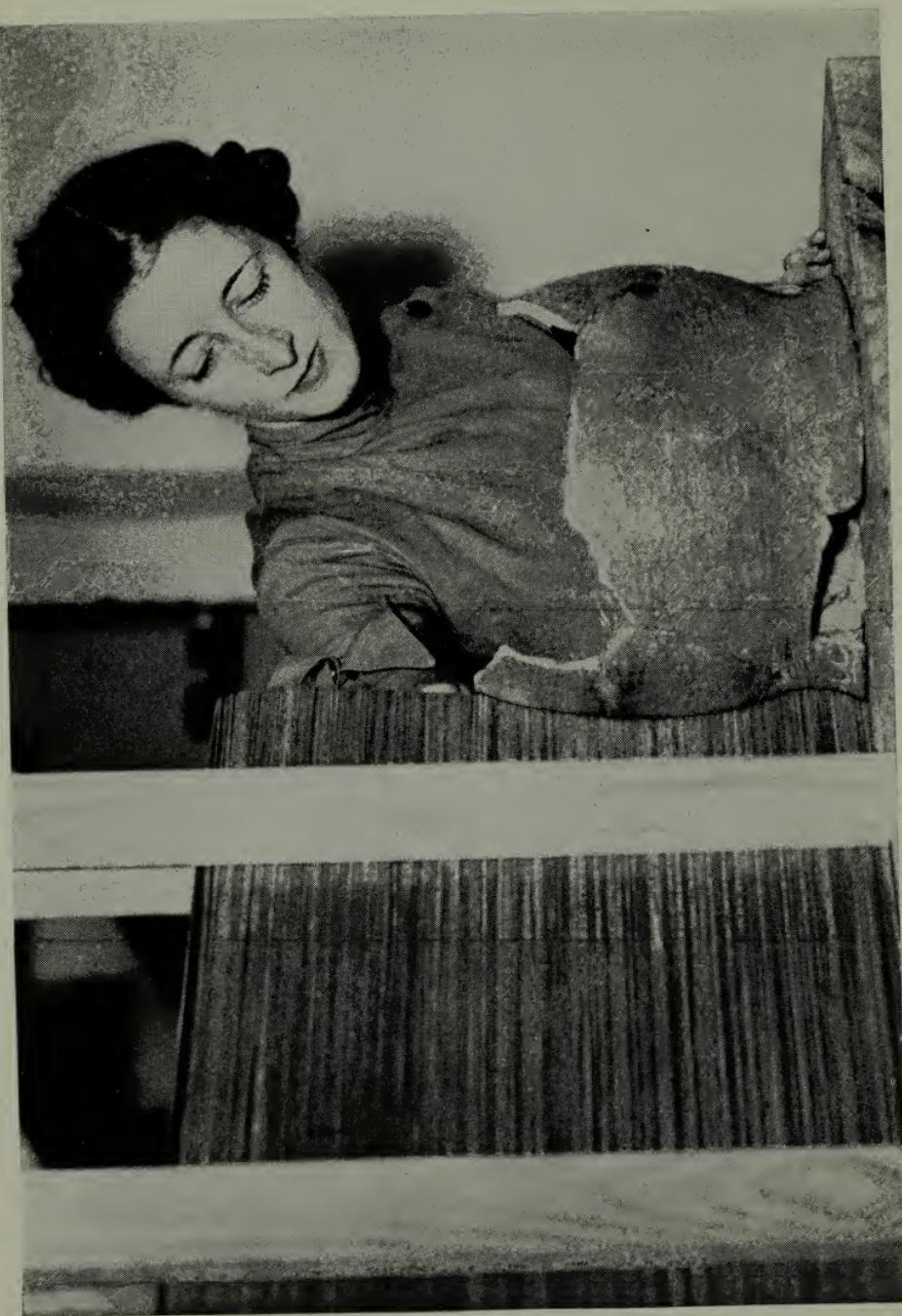
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All that remained of an ancient burial at Ocmulgee. Note rusty saber, ax, and other European trade material.

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Using metal profile gage in reconstructing an excavated pot in the archeological laboratory at Ocmulgee National Monument.

Indoor Archeology*

By Charles H. Fairbanks, Junior Archeologist, Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon, Georgia.

IN THE popular imagination the archeologist is a mysterious fellow who delves in the ground and periodically emerges with exciting news of some striking discovery—a rare object, bones of strange people long since buried, remains of ancient towns and villages, or other material evidence of the existence of man in past ages. He is a sort of glorified ditch digger who, spade in hand, pushes back the boundaries of our knowledge of human life before the dawn of history or adds concrete information to support the written record of the historic past.

In reality the archeologist is a scientist whose work requires the use of many and varied techniques. When he drops his spade and trowel and climbs out of his excavation his work is but half done. Armed with voluminous field maps, sketches, and notes, he moves his excavated materials indoors. There, in his specially equipped laboratory, he painstakingly analyzes his finds and compares them with discoveries made at other sites. Then he prepares the detailed reports which announce to other archeologists and to the world at large the real nature and significance of his findings.

The Ocmulgee laboratory was established for the purpose of cataloging and studying the large collections of pottery and

* From *The Regional Review* (National Park Service, Region One, Richmond, Va.), Vol. III, No. 3, September 1939, pp. 9-13.

other objects excavated since 1933 at Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon, Ga., and a number of nearby sites. This extensive excavation program resulted in about 30,000 storage boxes of potsherds (fragments of Indian vessels), flint tools, bone and shell ornaments, and numerous other objects of Indian manufacture.

The laboratory was established early in 1938. It took over the staff of the earlier field laboratory which had been operating during excavation. Temporary quarters for storage and office space were obtained in the Macon Municipal Auditorium. The staff consisted of 35 clerical workers supplied by WPA, ERA, and CCC, under the direction of two supervisors.

The first problem was to catalog adequately all the material and to index the voluminous field notes and observations written by the excavation staff. During excavation the archeologist separates the material into groups according to the evidence revealed in digging. Thus a single field number may be assigned to a single object or to a collection of similar objects from the same location, soil level, house floor, burial, and the like. In the case of whole pottery vessels, stone tools, and similar materials each object is given a separate number. Small potsherds, broken tools, scraps of animal bone, and related objects are lumped together so that all of the materials from one place may be handled at the same time. This segregation depends upon the judgment and knowledge of the archeologist. Notes are taken for each separate piece on the surroundings, soil condition, associated objects, depth, or other items of significance. The notes, together with a running account of the excavation, are returned to the laboratory where they are typed, indexed, and preserved for future reference.

The purpose of cataloging is to make each collection readily available for analysis together with the notes describing its discovery. In the laboratory a number is first assigned to each object or collection. This consists of a serial number and an abbreviation identifying the site by county. This is written on the object

in India ink, or, in the case of beads and other small objects, on an attached tag. The number also appears in the upper left corner of the catalog card as shown in the accompanying illustration. The catalog card also contains (at the left side) references to various notes, profiles, maps, or photographs of the material. On the right side of the card are recorded the site name, field number, horizontal location, depth, and associations, together with a description of the material. The location in the storage spaces is given at the bottom. The cards are typed in triplicate and filed by master catalog number, site (geographical unit), and by material (bone, stone, shell, or pottery). When the catalog cards are completed and filed it is possible to learn all the information available by consulting the file under any one of the three headings.

More than a million objects have been cataloged in this manner. These fall into some 35,000 collections representing either single objects or boxes of sherds, flint, or bone fragments. This large number of objects is temporarily stored in approximately 10,000 boxes, 10 exhibit tables, and 35 feet of shelves for whole vessels. The great majority of this mass of material came from the Macon plateau and the Lamar tract, the two areas of Ocmulgee National Monument.

The second phase of work in the laboratory is the preservation and restoration of excavated material. All human bones from burials, as well as bone tools, such as awls, punches, and needles, are strengthened by saturation with a solution of synthetic resin in acetone. Shell beads and ornaments must be cleaned carefully before they are strengthened with the same solution. Wood and charcoal specimens are preserved by soaking in a mixture of paraffin and gasoline which makes them more easily handled by the dendro-chronologist. These wood specimens are vitally important because it is hoped that exact dates for the various occupations can be determined from a study of the climatic changes as recorded by the growth rings. Copper ornaments from the



Identification serial numbers are written in India ink on pottery fragments when excavated objects are cataloged.

historic Creek occupation are cleaned with chemicals to prevent further corrosion, and reveal something of the original appearance. These copper bells, buckles, bracelets, and other ornaments, when cleaned of the green patina, reveal an attractive yellow color that readily explains why copper was such a favorite article of trade among the Indians. Many glass beads from the Creek village and shell beads from the earlier settlements must be strung—a considerable task when it is considered that more than 26,000 minute shell beads were found with a single burial.

Finally, the pottery vessels which have been crushed by burial in the earth or broken by the Indians must be restored to their original form. The first step is to fit and glue together all the pieces recovered. In many cases it is then simply a matter of filling in with plaster of paris a few small missing fragments. Often, however, only a third or a half of the vessel is found. In this situation it is necessary to construct a mold of clay by the use of the pottery wheel to support the sherds while the lost section is replaced. This is done only in cases where similar vessels are at hand in sufficiently intact condition to indicate clearly the shape of the missing parts. The reconstruction of badly broken vessels from as many as 200 pieces is often an extremely delicate task compared to which the most difficult jigsaw puzzle is child's play. The work of the restoration unit provides material for museum exhibits and enables the archeologist to get a better picture of the objects as the Indians actually used them.

The third function of the laboratory is to analyze the materials with a view toward making technical reports. Analysis depends upon the habit of human beings to make things in "style." Thus the various Indian settlements on the Ocmulgee had different styles of pottery, tools, and ornaments. Within a single group these styles changed with time or the influence of other groups. The archeologist calls these styles "types" and by careful study identifies the various types, their changes, and relationships to other types.



Temporary storage of cataloged objects.

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Site Name Mound C Exc. Date 2-14-34

Level Md.IV Field Spec. No. 42 Depth 5.6'

Location 3.2' N. stake 1426, 1.9' W. stake 1426; in
Pit # 2, Burial #46.

Object or Collection Halstead Plain water-bottle,
10.5 cm. high, 15.9 cm. diameter. Color: Chocolate.
Hardness: 2.5

Probable Cultural Allocation - If Known

Stored Rack 6, Section 5

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